OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) There is no policy regarding preferential purchases from the Units established under the SEMFEX Schemes.

(b) Does not arise.

Industrially backward districts of U.P., Bihar and M.P.

1492. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the industrially backward districts of U.P., Bihar and Madhya Pradesh;

(b) whether there is a proposal to add some more districts in this list; if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of new Industries which have come up in each of these backward district in the last three years;

(d) what has been the estimated investments of each of those; and

(e) the names of those industries which have gone into production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI P. J. KURIEN): (a) The centrally identified backward districts of U.P., Bihar and Madhya Pradesh are given below:—

1. *UTTAR PRADESH*: Almora, Azamgarh, Badaun, Bahraich, Ballia, Banda, Barabanki, Basti, Bulandshar, Chamoli, Deoria, Etah, Etawah, Faizabad, Farrukhabaod, Fatehpur, Garhwal, Ghazipur, Gonda, Hamirpur, Hardoi, Jalaun, Jaunpur, Jhansi, Mainpuri, Mathura, Moradabad, Pilibhit, Pithoragarh, Pratapgarh, Rai-Bareilli, Rampur, Shahajahanpur, Sitapur, Sultanpur, Tehri Garhwal, Unnao and Uttar Kashi.

2. *BIHAR*: Bhagalpur, Champaran, Darbhanga, Muzaffarpur, Palamau, Purnea, Saharasa, Santhal, Parganas, Sawan, Nalanda, Aurangabad, Nawadah, Gaya, Bhojpur, Begusarai and Monghyr.

3. *MADHYA PRADESH*: Balaghat, Bastar, Betul, Bilaspur, Bhind, Chhattarpur, Chhindwara, Damoh, Datia, Dhar, Dewas, Guna, Hoshangabad, Jhabua, Khargone, Mandla, Mandsaur, Morena, Narsimhapur, Panna, Raigarh, Raipur, Rajnandgoan, Rajgarh, Raisan, Ratlam, Rewa, Sagar, Seoni Shajapur, Shivpuri, Sidhi, Surguja, Tikamgarh, Vidisha and New Sehore District.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The number of Letters of Intent and Industrial licences issued to the backward districts of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh for setting up industries is given below:

	1988		1989		1990	
	LOI	IL	LOI	IL	LOI	IL
Uttar Pradesh	86	20	105	25	74	30
Bihar	8	2	5	..	1	1
Madhya Pradesh	52	15	39	19	39	16

(d) and (e) The information is not available readily.

Salt Industry

1493. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report which appeared in the 'Financial Express' of 16th August, 1991 captioned "Salt industry reaching under constraints";

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what remedial steps are being taken in this regard so that salt industry may overcome its present problem and consumers may get salt at fair prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI P. J. KURIEN): (a) and (b) Government has seen the report on salt industry which appeared in the 'Financial Express' dated 16th August, 1991 indicating inadequate supply of wagons by the Railways, supply of salt in open wagons leading to shortage of destination and decrease in iodine content, charging freight by Railways for the salt moved by the longer route, stagnation of export due to low rate of loading, ceiling limit for export of iodised salt, diesel cruch, steady rise in salt prices since March, 1989 etc.

(c) A statement is attached.

Statement

The remedial steps initiated by the Government to overcome the present problems and ensure availability of salt to the consumers at fair prices are:—

1. The Railways have been required to clear pending indents for salt mainly on the West Zone;

2. The Railways are supplying covered wagons during the period from 15th June to 15th September. Though they have been requested for movement of salt by covered wagons thrughout the whole year, they expressed their inability to do so because of their problems;

3. The Railways have been requested to move common salt for the purpose of iodisation under Category 'B';

4. The Railways have been requested to charge freight by shorter route for salt moved by longer route;

5. Imposition of ceiling limit of 5 lakh tonnes on iodised salt does not stand in the way of exports as the present level of export of iodised salt is very low (approximately 70,000 tonnes per annum);

6. The salt manufacturers have been advised to hold the price line;

7. The Railways have been requested to supply additional rakes for some of the States like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar where increase in the price was reported;

8. The Railways have been requested to clear pending indents on priority basis to increase availability of edible salt at the consuming centres;

9. Monitoring of daily and weekly prices of salt has been undertaken. The State Governments/Union Territories have also been requested to monitor prices and also to take dehoarding measures to avoid artificial scarcity;

10. Salt manufacturers have been advised to operate their holdings to the maximum so as to meet the increasing demand;

11. Diesel crunch was for a very short period and now it is being made available freely to the salt industries;

12. An understanding is being arrived mutually between salt manufacturers and Port authorities regarding fixation of quantity for export;